

- closing the mold, a portion of the sheet projecting from the join plane after the mold has closed;
- compacting the sheet;
- trimming off a portion of the sheet projecting from the join plane after the mold has closed; and
- unmolding the part.

2. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the sheet is pressed against the first portion of the mold initially substantially in the center thereof.

B 3. (Amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein the at least one pusher comprises a plurality of pushers and wherein the sheet is pressed against the first portion of the mold initially using at least one pusher situated substantially in the center of the mold, and then progressively by other pushers, pushers furthest from the center of the mold being actuated last.

4. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein trimming is performed by blades mounted on a cursor.

5. (Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein the cursor has an inside wall configured so as to cooperate with the mold to form a compression chamber, and wherein thermoplastics material is overmolded on the sheet inside said compression chamber.

6. (Amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein the thermoplastic material is deposited by being extruded on the sheet before the mold is closed.

7. (Amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein the sheet is overmolded by injecting thermoplastics material into the mold after the mold has been closed.

8. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the first mold portion has at least one groove and the second mold portion has at least one rib arranged to engage in

said at least one groove, so as to trim the sheet at least in part around the outline of the at least one groove when the mold is closed.

9. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the first portion constitutes a die having a setback in its top portion such that the resulting part is of generally channel section, with the web of the channel section having an indentation whose concave side faces in the opposite direction to the concave side of the channel section.

10. (Amended) A method according to claim 9, wherein the second mold portion has at least one pusher arranged to engage in the setback of the first portion.

Sub 2
11. (Amended) A mold for forming a sheet of reinforced plastics material, the mold comprising:

B
first and second portions that are movable relative to each other;

at least one pusher mounted on the second portion and movable relative thereto so as to press said sheet at least locally against the first portion before the mold is closed; and

at least one trimmer enabling the portion of the sheet that projects from the join plane to be trimmed off once the mold is closed.

12. (Amended) A mold according to claim 11, wherein the first portion has a setback and at least one of the pushers has an end of profile that corresponds substantially to the shape of the setback.

13. (Amended) A mold according to claim 11, wherein one of the two mold portions has at least one groove and the other portion has at least one rib arranged to engage in said at least one groove so as to perform partial trimming of the part that is produced.

14. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the reinforced plastics material part is a structural part of a motor vehicle.

Sub C³ → 15. (Amended) A method of manufacturing a reinforced plastics material part from a sheet of drapable material by using a mold comprising first and second mold portions that are movable relative to each other, the method comprising:

- preheating the sheet;
- placing the preheated sheet on the first portion of the open mold;
- pressing the sheet against the first portion at at least one location using at least one pusher mounted on the second portion of the mold and movable relative to said second portion;
- closing the mold and compacting the sheet; and
- unmolding the part.

B¹ 16. (Amended) A method of manufacturing a reinforced plastics material part from a sheet of drapable material by using a mold comprising first and second mold portions that are movable relative to each other, the method comprising:

- preheating the sheet;
- placing the preheated sheet on the first portion of the open mold;
- pressing the sheet against the first portion at at least one location using at least one pusher mounted on the second portion of the mold and movable relative to said second portion;
- closing the mold, a portion of the sheet projecting from the join plane after the mold has closed;
- compacting the sheet;
- trimming of the portion of the sheet that projects from the join plane; and
- unmolding the part.

Sub C4
17. (Amended) An apparatus for manufacturing a reinforced plastics material part from a sheet of drapable material by using a mold comprising first and second mold portions that are movable relative to each other, comprising:

means for placing the sheet on the first portion of the open mold;

means for pressing the sheet against the first portion at at least one location using at least one pusher mounted on the second portion of the mold and movable relative to said second portion;

2
B means for closing the mold, a portion of the sheet projecting from the join plane after the mold has closed;

means for compacting the sheet;

means for trimming off the portion of the sheet that projects from the join plane; and

means for unmolding the part.

[Please add new claims 18-36 as follows:]

--18. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the sheet comprises a thermoplastic material.--

3
B --19. (New) A method according to claim 18, wherein the sheet comprises polypropylene.--

--20. (New) A method according to claim 15, wherein the sheet is pressed against the first portion of the mold initially substantially in the center thereof.--

--21. (New) A method according to claim 20, wherein the at least one pusher comprises a plurality of pushers and wherein the sheet is pressed against the first portion of the mold initially using at least one pusher situated substantially in the center of the mold, and then progressively using other pushers, a pusher furthest from the center of the mold being actuated last.--

--22. (New) A method according to claim 15 comprising:

. trimming off a portion of the sheet projecting from the join plane.--

--23. (New) A method according to claim 22, wherein trimming is performed by blades mounted on a cursor.--

--24. (New) A method according to claim 23, wherein the cursor has an inside wall configured so as to cooperate with the mold to form a compression chamber, and wherein a thermoplastic material is overmolded on the sheet inside said compression chamber.--

--25. (New) A method according to claim 24, wherein the thermoplastic material is deposited by being extruded on the sheet before the mold is closed.--

--26. (New) A method according to claim 24, wherein the sheet is overmolded by injecting the thermoplastic material into the mold after the mold has been closed.--

--27. (New) A method according to claim 15, wherein the sheet comprises a thermoplastic material.--

--28. (New) A method according to claim 27, wherein the sheet comprises polypropylene.--

--29. (New) A method according to claim 15, wherein the first portion constitutes a die having a setback in its top portion such that a resulting part is of generally channel section, with a web of the channel section having an indentation whose concave side faces in the opposite direction to a concave side of the channel section.--

--30. (New) A method according to claim 29, wherein the second mold portion has at least one pusher arranged to engage in the setback of the first portion.--

Sub C5 → --31. (New) A method of manufacturing a reinforced plastics material part from a sheet of drapable material by using a mold comprising first and second mold portions that are movable relative to each other and a plurality of pushers movably mounted on the second mold portion, the method comprising:

- placing the sheet on the first portion of the open mold;
- pressing the sheet against the first portion of the mold initially using at least one pusher situated substantially in the center of the mold, and then progressively using other pushers, a pusher furthest from the center of the mold being actuated last;
- closing the mold;
- compacting the sheet; and
- unmolding the part.--

--32. (New) A method according to claim 31 comprising:

- trimming off a portion of the sheet projecting from the join plane of the mold.--

B³. --33. (New) A method of manufacturing a reinforced plastics material part from a sheet of drapable material by using a mold comprising first and second mold portions that are movable relative to each other, the method comprising:

- placing the sheet on the first portion of the open mold;
- pressing the sheet against the first portion at at least one location using at least one pusher mounted on the second portion of the mold and movable relative to said second portion;
- closing the mold;
- pre-trimming the sheet in such a manner that a first portion of the sheet is connected to a second portion of the sheet by a bridge of material extending between cut-outs;
- compacting the sheet; and
- unmolding the part.--

--34. (New) A method according to claim 33, wherein the first mold portion has at least one groove and the second mold portion has at least one rib arranged to engage in said at least one groove, so as to trim the sheet at least in part around the outline of the at least one groove when the mold is closed.--

--35. (New) A method of manufacturing a reinforced plastics material part from a sheet of drapable material comprising a thermoplastic material by using a mold comprising first and second mold portions that are movable relative to each other, the method comprising:

- placing the sheet on the first portion of the open mold;
- pressing the sheet against the first portion at at least one location using at least one pusher mounted on the second portion of the mold and movable relative to said second portion;
- closing the mold;
- compacting the sheet; and
- unmolding the part.--

--36. (New) A method according to claim 35, wherein the sheet is preheated before being placed in the mold.--

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1-17 are amended and claims 18-36 are added.

Accordingly, claims 1-36 are pending. No new matter is added.

The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of each amended claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Shipsides for the September 4 telephone interview and Examiners Shipsides and Eashoo for the courtesy extended to Applicant's representative, Klifton L. Kime, at the October 3 personal interview. The substance of the interviews is incorporated in the following remarks.